

COMMUNITY



Sara Elsemore



Walker Day



Hannah Howard



Amber Dindorf

Mountain Garden Club expands scholarship program with 5 awards

CONWAY — The Mountain Garden Club has awarded a record \$7,000 in scholarships and grants for the 2016-17 academic year. For the first time, the club expanded its Alice T. Madden Scholarship program to include a recent college graduate working in the Mount Washington Valley.

Jessica E. Wright, outreach coordinator and office manager for the Upper Saco Valley Land Trust, was awarded a special \$1,000 grant to assist with repayment of student debt.

A 2007 Fryeburg Academy graduate, Wright earned a bachelor's degree in business from Babson College and a master's degree in environmental law and public policy from Vermont Law School.

Administered by the Mount Washington Preservation Association, the Mountain Garden Club grant was restricted to an environmental professional living and working in the Mount Washington Valley. The MW

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Preservation Association provides additional loan payment assistance without restriction to profession.

A native to the area, Wright said young professionals often find it difficult to find work with wages high enough to support mortgages and student loans.

"This grant program offers a tangible solution to the problem of brain drain here in the Mount Washington Valley," said Wright in her application. "My student loan payments have now jumped to \$400 a month. This grant gives me relief for two and a half months."

Garden Club President Wendy McVey noted that in addition to the academic scholarships awarded to high school and college students, the Mountain Garden Club supports young people from elementary school straight through college with programs and scholarships. The club recently worked with Kennett High School students and funded a native plant garden at the entrance to the

school's sports stadium.

"The loan assistance grant brings our involvement with local young people full circle," McVey said.

The club also awarded \$1,500 one-year scholarships to four local students, including Walker Day, who has received the award all four years of his college career. Day is a 2013 Fryeburg Academy graduate who is studying forestry at the University of Maine. His goal is to become a forester for a private land company.

Amber Dindorf, a 2014 Fryeburg Academy graduate, is another repeat scholarship recipient. Dindorf will return to St. Lawrence University in Canton, N.Y., to study environmental science, ecosystems and sustainability. This is Amber's second year receiving a Mountain Garden Club scholarship.

Graduating seniors receiving scholarships are:

Sara Elsemore, a Kennett High School graduate who plans to study environmental science and biology at the University of New England.

Hannah Howard, a Fryeburg Academy graduate who plans to study

sustainable agriculture at Sterling College in Vermont.

Alice T. Madden was a former president and charter member of the Mountain Garden Club. A passionate gardener, Madden enjoyed sharing her extensive horticultural knowledge with young people. Scholarships are awarded yearly through the Mountain Garden Club which posts applications and requirements in January on its website, www.mountaingardenclub.org, as well as in guidance offices of local high schools. Students from the Mount Washington Valley who plan on majoring in a plant-related discipline are eligible to apply.

Applications are due in early spring 2017. The exact deadline will be published on the website in winter 2016-17.

The loan assistance repayment grant was administered for the Mountain Garden Club through the Mount Washington Valley Preservation Society this year. Recent college graduates employed in plant related disciplines in the Mount Washington Valley were eligible to apply.

One of the largest and most active garden clubs in New Hampshire, the

Mountain Garden Club is dedicated to promoting horticultural education, civic beautification and conservation through volunteerism and friendship.

Members take an active part in beautification projects throughout the area during the warm weather months. The club also supports Habitat for Humanity, Children Unlimited Inc., Merriman House, Tin Mountain Conservation Center, Jen's Friends (dedicated to providing supplemental financial resources to the at-risk cancer patients in the greater Mt. Washington Valley area), Angel's & Elves, and the North Conway Community Center.

The Mountain Garden Club runs a number of fundraisers over the course of the year which provide money for the scholarship fund. Included among those are the annual holiday boutique and spring plant sale.

Membership is open to all residents, full- or part-time, in the Mount Washington Valley.

For more information regarding the club, its programs and activities go to www.mountaingardenclub.org or email info@mountaingardenclub.org.